Amendments to the Claims

The current listing of the claims replaces all previous amendments and listings of the claims.

1.-6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently Amended) An image formation system having a link copy mode in which, of a plurality of image formation apparatuses connected to each other for enabling data communications, an image formation apparatus functioning as a master machine reads an image of a document to be copied, the read image is transferred to at least one other image formation apparatus functioning as a slave machine, and printing of the read image is shared by said master machine and said slave machine,

wherein said slave machine reports the is configured to report functions available in said slave machine to said master machine, and said master machine inhibits the is configured to inhibit operation in the link copy mode when an unusable function is selected in the link copy mode and a non-executable function in said master machine or said slave machine is after the link copy mode has been selected.

8. (Currently Amended) The image formation system according to the claim 7, wherein the functions include comprise a staple function.

9. (Currently Amended) The image formation system according to the claim 7, wherein said master machine is connected to the salve device slave machine peer to peer.

10. (Currently Amended) An image formation apparatus connected to at least one other image formation apparatus such that data communications can be executed between the two image formation apparatuses, said image formation apparatus comprising:

a reading unit which reads configured to read an image of a document;

a printing unit which prints configured to print the read image of [[a]] the document;

a display unit ~~which displays~~ configured to display keys ~~used for selecting~~ to select a function; and

a controller ~~which executes~~ configured to execute a link copy mode in which the read image is transferred to said other image formation apparatus ~~for sharing the~~ to share printing of the read image with the ~~local~~ image formation apparatus and said other image formation apparatus,

wherein ~~if the link copy mode in said local image formation apparatus or said other image formation apparatus is selected, then~~ the image forming apparatus is configured to not display in a link copy mode a key ~~for selecting, the non-executable~~ to permit selection of an unusable function ~~is not displayed on said display unit~~ in the link copy mode after the link copy mode has been selected.

11. (Currently Amended) The image formation apparatus according to the claim 10, wherein the ~~functions include~~ function comprises a staple function.

12. (Original) The image formation apparatus according to the claim 10, wherein said image formation apparatus is connected to said other image formation apparatus peer to peer.

13. (Currently Amended) An image formation system having a link copy mode in which, of a plurality of image formation apparatuses connected to each other for enabling data communications, an image formation apparatus functioning as a master machine reads an image of a document to be copied, the read image is transferred to at least one other image formation apparatus functioning as a slave machine, and printing of the read image is shared by said master machine and said slave machine,

wherein said slave machine ~~reports the~~ is configured to report functions available in said slave machine to said master machine, and said master machine ~~does~~ is configured to not display in a link copy mode a key ~~used for selecting a non-executable~~ to permit selection of

an unsuable function ~~when~~ in the link copy mode ~~in said master machine or said slave~~

~~machine is~~ after the link copy mode has been selected.

14. (Currently Amended) The image formation system according to the claim 13,

wherein the functions ~~include~~ comprise a staple function.

15. (Currently Amended) The image formation system according to the claim 13,

wherein said master machine is connected to the ~~salve device~~ slave machine peer to peer.

16.-21. (Canceled)

22. (Currently Amended) An image formation apparatus connected to at least one

other image formation apparatus such that data communications can be executed between the

~~two~~ image formation apparatuses, said image formation apparatus comprising:

a reading unit ~~which reads~~ configured to read an image of a document;

a printing unit ~~which prints~~ configured to print the read image of [[a]] the document;

and

a controller ~~which executes~~ configured to execute a link copy mode in which the read

image is transferred to said other image formation apparatus ~~for sharing the~~ to share printing

of the read image with the ~~local~~ image formation apparatus and said other image formation

apparatus,

wherein the image forming apparatus is configured to cancel in a link copy mode a

mode ~~for executing a non-executable~~ to permit execution of an unusable function in said ~~local~~

image formation apparatus or said other image formation apparatus ~~is cancelled~~ when the

mode is selected in the link copy mode after the link copy mode has been selected in said

~~local~~ image formation apparatus or said other image formation apparatus ~~is selected~~.

23. (Currently Amended) The image formation apparatus according to the claim 22,

wherein the ~~functions include~~ function comprises a staple function.

24. (Original) The image formation apparatus according to the claim 22, wherein said image formation apparatus is connected to said other image formation apparatus peer to peer.

25. (Currently Amended) An image formation system having a link copy mode in which, of a plurality of image formation apparatuses connected to each other for enabling data communications, an image formation apparatus functioning as a master machine reads an image of a document to be copied, the read image is transferred to at least one other image formation apparatus functioning as a slave machine, and printing of the read image is shared by said master machine and said slave machine,

wherein said slave machine ~~reports the~~ is configured to report functions available in said slave machine to said master machine, and said master machine ~~cancels~~ is configured to cancel a mode ~~for executing a non-executable~~ to permit execution of an unusable function in said master machine or said slave machine when the mode is selected in the link copy mode after the link copy mode has been selected in said master machine or said slave machine ~~is selected~~.

26. (Currently Amended) The image formation system according to the claim 25, wherein the ~~functions include~~ function comprises a staple function.

27. (Currently Amended) The image formation system according to the claim 25, wherein said master machine is connected to the ~~salve device~~ slave machine peer to peer.

28.-33. (Canceled)

34. (Currently Amended) An image formation apparatus connected to at least one other image formation apparatus such that data communications can be executed between the two image formation apparatuses, said image formation apparatus comprising:

a reading unit ~~which reads~~ configured to read an image of a document;

a printing unit ~~which prints~~ configured to print the read image of [[a]] the document;
and

a controller configured to execute a link copy mode in which the read image is

transferred to said other image formation apparatus ~~for sharing the~~ to share printing of the

read image with the ~~local~~ image formation apparatus and said other image formation

apparatus,

wherein ~~if~~ the image forming apparatus is configured to inhibit operation in the link

copy mode when an unusable function is selected in the link copy mode ~~is~~ after the link copy

mode has been selected and said other image formation apparatus is not in ~~the~~ a state where

data communications can be executed~~, then the link copy operation is inhibited~~.

35.   (Original) The image formation apparatus according to the claim 34, wherein

said image formation apparatus is connected to said other image formation apparatus peer to

peer.

36.   (Currently Amended) An image formation apparatus connected to at least one

other image formation apparatus such that data communications can be executed between the

two image formation apparatuses, said image formation apparatus comprising:

a reading unit ~~which reads~~ configured to read an image of a document;

a printing unit ~~which prints an~~ configured to print the image; and

a reporting unit ~~which reports~~ configured to report to said other image formation

apparatus whether data communications can be executed from the ~~local~~ image formation

apparatus to said other image formation apparatus,

wherein an image of a document read by and transferred from said other image

formation apparatus is printed in said local image formation apparatus, and

<u>wherein the image forming apparatus is configured to inhibit operation in a link copy mode when an unusable function is selected in the link copy mode after the link copy mode has been selected</u>.

37. (Original) The image formation apparatus according to the claim 36, wherein said image formation apparatus is connected to said other image formation apparatus peer to peer.

38. (Currently Amended) An image formation system having a link copy mode in which, of a plurality of image formation apparatuses connected to each other for enabling data communications, an image formation apparatus functioning as a master machine reads an image of a document to be copied, the read image is transferred to at least one other image formation apparatus functioning as a slave machine, and printing of the read image is shared by said master machine and said slave machine,

wherein said slave machine ~~reports~~ <u>is configured to report</u> to said master machine whether data communications can be executed from said slave machine to said ~~slave~~ <u>master</u> machine, and said master machine ~~inhibits the~~ <u>is configured to inhibit an</u> operation in the link copy mode when <u>an unusable function is selected in</u> the link copy mode ~~is selected~~ <u>after the link copy mode has been selected</u> and said slave machine is not in data communications executable state.

39. (Currently Amended) The image formation system according to the claim 38, wherein said slave machine <u>is configured to</u> periodically ~~transmits~~ <u>transmit</u> a communication connection confirmation signal ~~indicating~~ <u>to indicate</u> whether connection has been established to said master machine, and said master machine ~~receives~~ <u>is configured to receive</u> the communication connection confirmation signal and ~~determines~~ <u>to determine</u> whether said slave machine is ready for communication.

40. (Currently Amended) The image formation system according to the claim 38, wherein said master machine is connected to the ~~salve device~~ slave machine peer to peer.

41.-52. (Canceled)

53. (Currently Amended) An image formation system having a link copy mode in which, of a plurality of image formation apparatuses connected to each other for enabling data communications, an image formation apparatus functioning as a master machine reads an image of a document to be copied, the read image is transferred to at least one other image formation apparatus functioning as a slave machine, and printing of the read image is shared by said master machine and said slave machine,

wherein said slave machine ~~reports~~ is configured to report to said master machine whether data communications can be executed from said slave machine to said master machine, and said master machine ~~inhibits selection of~~ is configured to inhibit operation in the link copy mode when an unusable function is selected in the link copy mode after the link copy mode has been selected and when said slave machine is not in a state where data communication can be executed.

54. (Currently Amended) The image formation system according to the claim 53, wherein said slave machine is configured to periodically ~~transmits~~ transmit a communication connection confirmation signal ~~indicating~~ to indicate whether connection has been established to said master machine, and said master machine ~~receives~~ is configured to receive the communication connection confirmation signal and ~~determines~~ to determine whether said slave machine is ready for communication.

55. (Currently Amended) The image formation system according to the claim 53, wherein said master machine is connected to the ~~salve device~~ slave machine peer to peer.

56.-140. (Canceled)